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IMPROVED TRAINING FOR PHARMACISTS URGED

Recently the Board of the Ministry of Health heard a report submitted by N. G. Polyakov, chief of the Main Administration of Apothecaries, on the training and assignment of pharmaceutical personnel who are being trained in eight pharmaceutical institutes, eight special faculties at medical schools, and 54 pharmaceutical schools. In 1936, these various institutions graduated about 10,000 pharmacists. Today there is a 20 percent increase over the previous figure and more than 40 percent of these pharmacists hold the title of Doctor or Candidate of Pharmaceutical Sciences.

The length of the course at pharmaceutical schools is 4 years. However, this does not give the students an opportunity to learn the more specialized fields in pharmacy and also precludes the possibility of practical training before obtaining their diplomas. It is recommended, therefore, that the course of training be extended to 5 years. Improvements must be made in the program to raise the standards of pharmacists. At present, there is only one institute, at Kiev, which gives courses for the improvement of pharmacists. This one institute cannot satisfy the needs of the various pharmaceutical personnel, and it is recommended that similar institutions be established at Moscow and Leningrad.

An attempt will be made in 1949 to eliminate a number of isolated pharmaceutical schools, consolidate others, and thereby increase the number of graduates. There is a great demand for middle pharmaceutical personnel to staff village apothecary centers. Their pay is now 1,200 rubles, but it is hoped that it will be raised to 2,000 rubles by 1950.

Many pharmacists completed middle and advanced apothecary schools in 1948. The difficulty, however, is that they are not being used efficiently. It is suggested that better use be made of these higher qualified personnel, as only about 25 percent of the personnel at various apothecary enterprises can be classified as higher qualified pharmacists.

A special recommendation has been made to establish a system of advanced pharmaceutical schools at Moscow, Leningrad and Kiev, to give additional training to pharmacists who have had at least 15 years of practical experience.

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